



## COMMONS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, January 9, 2013

The Commons Board met on Wednesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. (EST) in the Xenia S. Miller Room at The Commons. Board Members Present: Ryan Brand, Cheryl Buffo, George Dutro, Paige Harden, Tracey Souza, Sherry Stark

Others Present: Mayor Kristen Brown, Jamie Brinegar, John Clark, Susan Fye, Jillian Keller, Glen Petri, Steve Risting, Steve Sanders, Ben Wagner, Lisa Westenberger and City Attorney Kelly Benjamin

Board members approved reordering the agenda to accommodate Mayor Brown's schedule. The Mayor updated the Board on the Scotty's restaurant space and explained the process for the City to lease property. She stated that:

1. The lease process has to be competitive. Appraisals must be sought before putting out to bid.
2. A request for proposals is issued. As much criteria as desired is stated in terms of what kind of tenant the City is looking for and what would need to be done to the space.

Mayor Brown clarified that the lease is not directly through Scott Wise but Greenhouse Restaurants LLC. She stated that if the court decides that the lease has been breached it triggers the process to open the space up for competitive proposals.

Columbus Redevelopment Commission will vote to determine if there is a material breach of the current contract. If so, it will authorize a letter of default to be given to Greenhouse Restaurants. Once the letter is served, the tenants have 15 days to cure the default. Under the current contract, the City believes the restaurant would have to reopen as a Scotty's in order to cure the default.

Mayor Brown mentioned that several local businesses have expressed interest in the space. She had attempted to contact each business for approval of being mentioned in a public meeting. Powerhouse Brewing was the only company she received approval of under such short notice.

Kelly Benjamin reminded the Board that by ordinance The Commons Board is the community's "voice." The Board has leadership in the oversight of the commercial space and the goal is to achieve a tenant mix which promotes downtown development goals, especially in the building: maximize net revenue; maximize activity; and maximize variety.

The Board discussed the priorities for the space. Sherry Stark summarized the Board's priorities as follows:

1. Public activity at street level, including the sidewalk area
2. Any RFP incorporates the lessons learned from the last experiences so that the Board can anticipate and proactively address the issues identified with the last tenant
3. That it be a positive transition.
4. Encourage the RFP to seek a unique niche in our community -- a business that avoids direct competition with existing businesses and is a family restaurant, including a bar.

Mayor Brown noted that she has not filled the Board seat vacated by Bob Stevens.

The Board discussed ideas for high priority capital improvements. Controlling the lighting in the performance space to reduce day-time glare on the projection screen, outdoor furniture and shading on the upper level patio; and a sound system for the Miller-Tangeman Lobby were identified. Steve Risting reported that these items were not included in the original design of the building because of cost. He contacted two suppliers for preliminary pricing for blinds. He is researching the pricing further. In his opinion, \$150,000 should be budgeted.

Lisa Westenberger mentioned that a sound system quote from Clearsound (the same company that supplied the sound system in the Nugent-Custer Performance Hall) estimated the cost at \$15,000 for the Lower Lobby.

Sherry stressed that the Board, working with The Commons staff and Steve Risting, should determine a list of high priority capital improvements. Funding for these enhancements will be sought from Heritage Fund. The items should not include maintenance work but rather those improvements that would be major enhancement of benefit to the community.

The board agreed to leave exterior signage off the list – at least for now.

Tracey Souza confirmed there are funds through Heritage Fund that can cover the items on the list.

George Dutro requested that The Commons staff provide the board with a finalized list of desired items at the next board meeting so that the board can prepare a proposal to the Heritage Fund.

Paige Harden moved and Ryan Brand seconded approval of the minutes from November 14th, 2012. Motion carried.

Kelly Benjamin asked Sherry to sign final assignments for the master lease. Sherry confirmed with Kelly that she has the authority to do so and agreed to sign.

Kelly reported on the easement between The Commons and the Cummins building. She stated all of the areas downstairs have been outlined for the easement. Cummins will review the easement draft. Trash compactor usage will be included in the description. Management agreement between the tenants will also be necessary and will need to be separate from the easement.

Sherry asked for an update on the current issues with playground equipment in regards to broken hardware. Lisa and Ben will inform the Board next month including providing some improvement options.

Sherry was re-elected President for 2013 and Cheryl Buffo Vice President on motion by George and second by Ryan. Board approved the slate as presented.

The question of meeting frequency was raised. Kelly requested that due to the current situations, the Board should continue to meet monthly except for December. Board approved.

Lisa reviewed the 2013 financial outlook. As of current reports, the Commons is at \$73,000 revenue for 2013. Lisa will present the yearend numbers with events at the next meeting. Sherry reported that the Art's Council is taking the lead on the Columbus Cultural Art's District.

Meeting adjourned.

Jillian Keller, acting secretary

2013 Meeting Dates:

**January 9<sup>th</sup>, February 13<sup>th</sup>, March 13<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>, June 12<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, August 14<sup>th</sup>, September 11<sup>th</sup>, October 9<sup>th</sup>, November 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Note: No December Meeting**